

American Institutes for Research

Academy for Educational Development

Aga Khan Foundation

CARE

Discovery Channel Global Education  
Fund

Education Development Center

Howard University

International Reading Association

The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation

Juárez and Associates, Inc.

Michigan State University

Sesame Workshop

Save the Children Federation, USA

University of Pittsburgh

World Education



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



**CARSI-Merida Youth at Risk project**  
**Quarterly Report**  
January 1, 2010 – March 31, 2010



Submitted by:

American Institutes for Research (AIR)

With local associate:

Foundation for the Autonomy and  
Development of the Nicaraguan Atlantic  
Coast (FADCANIC)

## **SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT**

Title of Project:	CARSI/Merida Youth At-Risk project under the Project “Expansion of Centers of Excellence in Nicaragua with Emphasis on the APA Methodology (EXCELENCIA)”
Main Contractor:	American Institutes for Research (AIR)
Local Associate:	Foundation for the Autonomy and Development of the Nicaraguan Atlantic Coast (FADCANIC)
USAID Cooperative Agreement No.	GDG-A-00-03-00006-00
USAID Nicaragua Cooperative Agreement No.	524-A-00-06-00004-00
Reporting Period:	January 1st - March 31, 2010
Budget:	\$3,000,000
Start Date:	September 30, 2009
End Date:	September 30, 2014
Official Contact For the Contractor:	Markus Broer Principal Psychometrician Dep. Director LAC region 1000 Thomas Jefferson St. NW Washington, DC 20007 Tel. 202 403-5524 Fax 202 403-5979 Email: <a href="mailto:mbroer@air.org">mbroer@air.org</a>

## Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	4
PROJECT ACTIVITIES .....	4
Coordination with local authorities .....	4
Enrollment and provision of services to beneficiaries.....	5
ACHIEVEMENTS.....	7
ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT QUARTER.....	8
ANNEX1 : Detailed enrollment data of primary students by implementation area .....	9

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the start-up phase and during this first quarter of 2010, the CARSI-Merida Youth At-Risk project has placed an emphasis on coordinating its activities with the authorities of the Ministry of Education of the South Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS), educational commissions of the target municipalities and other institutions working with youth at risk.

The project carried out a fair and conscientious selection process for beneficiaries and established arrangements with the primary public schools of the target communities to carry out a mentoring and tutoring strategy. Scholarship committees were established in each municipality served by the project.

The project has been very well received by the communities, parents are supportive and students have in general shown great discipline in terms of attendance and participation in the development of their classes. The great majority of beneficiaries has so far demonstrated a very positive attitude towards improving their life through education and improving their life skills.

A total of 110 students have been enrolled in the project since its inception. These young people face a number of risks like broken or abusive families, poverty, unplanned pregnancies, among others. Many are at risk of academic failure or dropping out of school and adopting a dangerous life style on the streets, including violence, alcohol and drug use.

The 110 beneficiaries include 90 recipients of primary school scholarships, 15 beneficiaries attending first and second grade secondary school, as well as 5 beneficiaries enrolled in the first short-term vocation training program in residential plumbing. The project is working in all three municipalities that that are targeted by the project: Bluefields, Kukra Hill, and Pearl Lagoon (including Haulover, Raitipura and Pearl Lagoon)

## **PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

### **Coordination with local authorities**

The project has established a good coordination with MINED RAAS and with Kukra Hill and Pearl Lagoon municipal offices.

The project held meetings in Bluefields with representatives of different authorities that deal with problems youth face (Education, Health, Family, Law enforcement). The project presented the objectives and goals for the first cohort 2010 to authorities and exchanged ideas about collaboration in this area. These meetings have been very positive and the project expects that the Community At-Risk Youth Advisory Committees (CAYACs) that will be constituted in April 2010 will count on the participation of at least one representative of local authorities besides directors and teachers that are serving the project.

Negotiations with representatives of Peace Corps continued with the objective of determining the feasibility of collaborating with development programs in the areas of English as a Second Language, Small Business, Community Health and Environment. It is planned to place a volunteer in Pearl Lagoon to provide assistance in courses relevant to life skills issues.

## Enrollment and provision of services to beneficiaries

The project is working in all three municipalities that are targeted by the project: Bluefields, Kukra Hill, and Pearl Lagoon (including Haulover, Raitipura and Pearl Lagoon). A total of 110 students have been enrolled in the CARSI project since its inception. The 110 beneficiaries include 90 recipients of primary school scholarships, 15 beneficiaries attending first and second grade secondary school, as well as 5 beneficiaries enrolled in the first short-term vocation training program in residential plumbing.

Promoters in the three municipalities are conducting regular monitoring and follow-up visits to the schools where scholarship recipients are attending, as well as conducting home visits to work with parents to ensure attendance, participation and good disposition to work with the program.

Tutoring and educational assistance visits are made during after school hours with the support of the teachers. Promoters offer study techniques and strategies and also involve parents in the activities. The visits have helped to change their attitude regarding the learning process as a direct result of the tutorials. Positive change is noticeable in youths and teachers.

During the tutorials made in the first quarter, academic support was granted mainly in the following areas:

- Working with the four fundamental operations of mathematics.
- Basic knowledge of Spanish (grammar and spelling)
- Basic skills of English as a second language

The tables below provide an overview of the distribution of the scholarship recipients, by scholarship type, location, gender and age.

**Table 1: No. of learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings. (Basic Education Element)**

MUNICIPALITY	INITIAL ENROLLMENT			AGES									
	Boys	Girls	Total	12		13		14		15		16+	
				B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Bluefields	16	14	30	-	5	6	-	1	5	4	1	5	3
Kukra Hill	12	18	30	1	7	1	5	3	2	4	2	3	2
Pearl Lagoon	16	14	30	-	5	6	-	1	5	4	1	5	3
Total per ages	44	46	<b>90</b>	1	17	13	5	5	12	12	4	13	8
% per ages				<b>20%</b>		<b>20%</b>		<b>19%</b>		<b>18%</b>		<b>23%</b>	

**Table 2: No. of learner No. of learners in enrolled in secondary schools or equivalent non-school based settings**

MUNICIPALITY	INITIAL ENROLLMENT			AGES									
	Boys	Girls	Total	12		13		14		15		16+	
				B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
<b>Pearl Lagoon</b>	8	7	<b>15</b>	-	-	-	-	4	4	4	3	-	-
<b>% per ages</b>								<b>53%</b>		<b>47%</b>			

### Short-term vocational training

In the month of January 2010 a short term vocational course for “Residential plumbing” was carried out. This course started on January 11th and concluded on January 27th for a total of 78 hours of class time. Attendance, participation, retention and achievements were of a 100%.

The 5 Young people who participated in the Plumbing course demonstrated interest and commitment at all times. Two mothers and 3 fathers requested to be integrated into the course, in order to support the 5 youths at risk. This arrangement proved to be very positive.

Basic contents that were developed during this first phase of the course are:

- Practical health and safety
- Plumbing pipe work
- PVC pipe work skills
- Plastic Tube installation
- Plumbing systems
- Domestic plumbing systems
- Kitchen and Bathroom installation

**Table 3: Number of persons participating in USG-funded workforce development programs**

MUNICIPALITY	INITIAL ENROLLMENT			AGES									
	Boys	Girls	Total	14		15		16		19		21	
				V	N	V	N	V	N	V	N	V	N
Pearl Lagoon	5	0	<b>5</b>	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-
<b>% per ages</b>				<b>20%</b>		<b>20%</b>		<b>20%</b>		<b>20%</b>		<b>20%</b>	

### **Life skills training activities**

In this quarter project staff prepared a life-skills training module on the topic of Citizenship. This has been very relevant due to new educational policies within the Regional framework for the SEAR and the Law no. 28 on Statutes for Autonomy. This life skills training module promotes consciousness on the importance of being a citizen, and the Rights and Duties that come with it.

## Gender and ethnicity

The program aims to provide equitable access to youth of all ethnic groups. In this first year, the project has beneficiaries from the following ethnic groups: Creole, Mestizo, Miskitu and Garifuna.

**Table 4: Number of beneficiaries by ethnicity**

Municipality	Total	Distribution per ethnic identity																	
		Mestizo			Creole			Garifuna			Miskitu			Rama			Mayangna		
		B	G	BG	B	G	BG	B	G	BG	B	G	BG	B	G	BG	B	G	BG
Bluefields	30	11	9	20	4	5	9	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kukra Hill	30	8	9	17	4	4	8	-	-	-	3	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pearl Lagoon	45	4	2	6	18	10	28	-	2	2	4	5	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	105	43			45			2			15			-----			-----		

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- The project has established a good coordination with MINED RAAS and with Kukra Hill and Pearl Lagoon municipal offices.
- The project has been very well received by the communities, parents are supportive and students have in general shown great discipline in terms of attendance and participation in the development of their classes.
- Establishment of scholarship committees in each municipality served by the project.
- The tutoring and educational assistance visits have helped to change students and teachers attitude regarding the learning process and positive change is already noticeable in young people and teachers.
- Enrolled 90 students for primary elementary schools (30 per municipality), 15 for secondary school in the municipality of Pearl Lagoon.
- Begin a first phase of short Vocational course in Plumbing with 5 youth at risk in Pearl Lagoon.
- The project is on track to meeting its 2010 enrollment targets (see table below)

**Table 5: 2010 enrollment targets and actual numbers**

	<b>2010 enrollment targets</b>	<b>2010 enrollment to date</b>
<b>Short-term Vocation Courses</b>	15	5
<b>Primary School Scholarship</b>	90	90
<b>Secondary School Scholarship</b>	0	0
<b>After-school Scholarship (secondary schools)</b>	30	15

### **ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT QUARTER**

- Official launch of the project with the participation the US ambassador and officials from USAID Nicaragua.
- Community At-Risk Youth Advisory Committees (CAYACs) with participation of representatives of local authorities will be constituted in April 2010
- School supplies as well as shoes and school uniforms will be distributed next quarter after reaching a consensus on mechanisms for the delivery of these without involving cash disbursements. For example, arrangements were made with seamstresses and tailors in the three communities to make pants and skirts for the youth. This is recommended as the market offers only low quality.



# ANNEX1 : Detailed enrollment data of primary students by implementation area

## Bluefields

MUNICIPALITY	SCHOOLS	INITIAL ENROLLMENT			AGES									
		B	G	BG	12		13		14		15		16+	
					B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Bluefields	El Hogar	3	7	10	-	3	1	-	-	1	-	1	2	2
	Salvador Sch.	6	4	10	-	2	2	-	-	2	2	-	2	-
	Ruben Darío	4	1	5	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	-
	Dinamarca	3	2	5	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	--	-	1
TOTAL		16	14	30	-	5	6	-	1	5	4	1	5	3
Total per ages					5		6		6		5		8	
% per ages					17%		20%		20%		17%		26%	

## Kukra Hill

MUNICIPALITY	SCHOOLS	INITIAL ENROLLMENT			AGES									
		B	G	BG	12		13		14		15		16+	
					B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Kukra Hill	Padre Hugo	10	18		1	7	1	5	3	2	3	2	2	2
	Bethel	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
TOTAL		12	18	30	1	7	1	5	3	2	4	2	3	2
Total per ages					8		6		5		6		5	
% per ages					26%		20%		17%		20%		17%	

## Pearl Lagoon

MUNICIPALITY	SCHOOLS	INITIAL ENROLLMENT			AGES									
		B	G	BG	12		13		14		15		16+	
					B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Pearl Lagoon	B.Lightburn	3	7	10	-	3	1	-	-	1	-	1	2	2
	Andres Castro	6	4	10	-	2	2	-	-	2	2	-	2	-
	Ruben Darío	4	1	5	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	-
	PLACE	3	2	5	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	--	-	1
TOTAL		16	14	30	-	5	6	-	1	5	4	1	5	3
Total per ages					5		6		6		5		8	
% per ages					17%		20%		20%		17%		26%	